

**MAIDSTONE MENCAP
CHARITABLE TRUST LTD**

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Cobtree Hall, Willington Street
Maidstone ME15 8EB

Registered Charity No 1009677 – Registered Company No 2672192

MAIDSTONE MENCAP CHARITABLE TRUST LIMITED

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PRESIDENT: Mrs Helen Grant MP

VICE PRESIDENTS: Vacant

DIRECTORS: Mrs Susan Roughley Chairman

Mr Mark Smith

Mrs Mary Rimmer

Mr Guy Roughley

Mrs Amanda Masters

Other Committee Members Mrs Lynn Snedden Secretary

Mr James Burrows Treasurer

Mrs Liane Morris Playschool & Clubs Manager

Mrs Tina Adams Centre Coordinator

Mrs Sarah Maybourne Grants Manager

Mrs Rebecca Fox Social Coordinator

MAIDSTONE MENCAP CHARITABLE TRUST LTD

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2023 has proved to be yet another successful year for the charity despite our ongoing challenges. I am hugely thankful to Liane Morris, our manager, and her incredibly hardworking team who continue to provide a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable service to our children, young adults, and their families.

Cobtree Playschool has supported a large number of new children this year boosting us to have full registers, whilst continuing to ensure that those leaving have the correct support in place at their new schools. Juniors is also in continuing demand with many joining from Playschool, or from having enjoyed their time at Summer Club so much. Youth club has been jam-packed full of music and dance sessions, cooking and craft activities, where our young adults have been supported to independently make decisions, increase their confidence and social skills as they continue to enjoy all that the charity can offer. In August, we hosted 90 children and young adults between the ages of 5-18 at our holiday club.

None of this would be possible without the commitment, dedication and care of our staff and volunteers. Though we are continually keen to recruit more volunteers, I must thank those who do for the friendship that they offer to the young people our charity supports. It is their passion which leads families wanting to return to us again and again.

The on-going maintenance of the hall and the ever-changing health and safety regulations are a constant drain on our resources. However this year has seen huge decorating improvements both in the hall and outside in the gardens which should see us through the next few years. With more work needed in 2024, we will be relying on further grant opportunities. A huge thank you goes to Tina Adam's family for their continual support in this area.

We have enjoyed some great fundraising events this year including a Golf Day, a boxing tournament, family barbeque, and a jumble sale. These were all extremely enjoyable raising additional funds for the charity. Thank you to everyone who has donated over the last year. We are always overwhelmed by the incredible generosity of individuals and would not be able to do many of our projects without this money. Thank you.

Thank you to our Trustees who continue to steward our charity with care and compassion. We are always looking for new Trustees to join the board so do get in touch if you would like to help.

I am very excited to see what 2024 has in store, as I am sure it will be another fantastic year for the charity, and most importantly for all who it endeavours to support.

Sue Roughley

FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2023

Opening balance, 1st January 2023: £187,725.20
Closing balance, 31st December 2022: £195,554.67
Balance increased by: £7,829.47

This was a combination of:
expenditure exceeding income: -£4,562.36
and an increase in the ring-fenced funds: +£12,391.83

INCOME

Clubs generated a surplus of £19.4k. However, Fundraising fell short by £84 k. Total target shortfall: £64.6k

EXPENDITURE

Overall, the charity underspent by £5k, which was mainly due to lower expenses on HR.

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Overall restricted funds totalled £54,928.44 (£110,464.11 when including Think BIG!)

The Think BIG! fund are monies the charity has put to one side to help finance large expenditure. Ideas include a covered outside area in the garden, and additional renovation projects to Cobtree Hall.

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|----------------|------------|
| Think BIG! | £55,535.67 |
| NL5Y | £9,671.34 |
| Juniors | £2,368.93 |
| Youth Club | £2,000.00 |
| DAF | £6,734.14 |
| SENIF | £0.00 |
| Community Fund | £10,000.00 |
| Garden | £24,154.03 |

Thank you to Liane, Tina, Mark, Sue and Lynn for helping me to manage the accounts over the course of 2023.

The finances for the year continued to build upon excellent work from previous years. The charity will continue to develop its processes to increase its chances of securing further funding to improve our service offering, and create an even better place for all those who work, learn and play at Cobtree Hall.

James Burrows
Honorary Treasurer

FUND-RAISING REPORT

Fund-raising is vital if we are to continue running all our services so we are really grateful to everyone who contributes their time, donates raffle prizes and other items for stalls, bakes cakes, displays posters, buys raffle tickets etc. etc. We can't manage without you and look forward to seeing you all at future fund raising events.

'Summer Fayre/Community Day June 2023 –We were fortunate to enjoy good weather, having a BBQ in the garden and various stalls and raffles which were popular with the crowd who attended. This was very successful event.

'Jumble Sale' October 2023 – this event was popular and well attended. We were fortunate to receive a good amount of donated clothing, toys and bric a bac.

Thank you to all our supporters who fundraised through our Just Giving website pages.

Throughout the year many people raise money in a number of ways whilst promoting and raising the profile of Maidstone Mencap within the local community – thank you.

Mark Smith – Trustee

GROUPS

Cobtree Playschool for Special Children
Annual report from January - December 2023

Cobtree Playschool continued to support families and their children entrusted into our care.

We supported new children joining us throughout the year, with registers full, we were able to support children and their transition to join us for the new school year in September by opening an attention day, on a Thursday for the summer term prior.

Our registers were again full, from the new school year September, with a decision made to open on a Thursday again for a small group of children from our waiting to start in the new year.

We are having difficulty in recruitment to find trained staff for a key person roll, and the recruitment for the much-valued roles of volunteers to be able to increase numbers whilst still being able to offer are continuing standards of care and early education.

We are continually aware of the need for our provision with those within the community, although it is good to see recommendations increasing from the children's therapy support network and word of mouth, we need to be proactive in maintaining the sustainability of our service and all the valuable support and care we are able to give to the children.

We supported many of our families with their educational and health care plan, completing with them the paperwork needed to ensure that the children leaving our care in the summer would have the right support in place at their new schools. The local council has been overwhelmed with the need for specialist school placements and we have supported children who have had to defer their school entry, for a term or for a school year.

We managed to say goodbye to those leaving for school and to celebrate the end of another school year, with a picnic for everyone in the garden. It is lovely to celebrate with the parents the children's achievements, to look through their unique photographed progress journey to show how well they have done and the steps they have made towards the early learning goals.

Although recruitment of volunteers is proving to be challenging, we continue to be grateful for the continuing support from our team of dedicated volunteers – those that have been with us for many years and those who help us between all their studies. It is thank you to their loyalty and commitment towards the children is what makes the difference in the provision, care and support we are able to give to our families.

The parent's feedback is always so positive and grateful to all, for being able to offer our provision to their children and the difference we have made for them.

I would again especially like to highlight the dedication and commitment of all our staff volunteers and helpers. Our team is able to be consistent due to the additional special educational needs funding we can receive for individual children, which enables our support and consistency in the individual strategies and techniques implemented to meet all the children personal needs and next steps in their early developmental goals.

It continues to be a privilege to work alongside them, recognising their kindness care and support to the children and their families, which continues to embed the ethos of the Playschool., As each year, a thank you never seems to be a big enough word for all that they do. It really goes to show what continuing support Cobtree Playschool and Maidstone Mencap have with the service we are providing for the children and their families in our community.

Juniors

With a continuing thankyou to the KCC disabled commissioning service and the grant award from their short break Local Offer we are able to run our club provision

Due to the continuing demand of places, we have kept to running our junior club, with three age groups, running alternate Saturdays to be able to support as many families as is possible although we have an evolving waiting list, we are able to offer 36 family's sessions with us.

We have children joining our Saturdays from their experiences at Playschool or Summer club, a testament to the care, commitment, hard work, enthusiasm from our staffing support, that families have developed their trust in the caring relationships that have been formed, and the consistency of support we can continue to provide for them. Having the consistency and knowledge from our team of staff across clubs, has meant the family's request for places at juniors is forever increasing.

We have an evolving lovely group of young helpers, coming from local schools in their sixth form of studies or completing Duke of Edinburgh awards for example. They are providing the one-to-one social interactions with the children. The children in our care are excited to come each session knowing or requesting their helpers by name "wanting to be with their friend" which embed the ethos of the offer of our Junior clubs.

A huge thank you to the dedication and commitment to all of those in our Junior Club team. It is lovely to see the potential future of Maidstone Mencap in the commitment they all bring.

Youth Club

With thankyou to the KCC disabled commissioning service and the grant award from their short break Local Offer we are able to run our club provision

The team have all worked with such tireless enthusiasm throughout this year to ensure that Youth club continues to offer a provision to those on our registers.

With the sessions being hall based, they included music, singing, dancing, craft activities or Bingo- the young adults have had such fun. We prepare a supper together, encouraging the young people to make a pizza, a toasted sandwich, make choices of what they would like on their jacket potato for example. We encourage their independent skills to help with clearing away washing up They have especially loved the dancing and singing at the end of each session, you can see the confidence and friendships formed with their peers and with our staff, making the sessions a joyfully energetic social experience for all.

Again, a huge thank you must go to everyone at Youth, for the time and commitment that goes to organising and planning these events. The young adults in their care are being given some wonderful experiences and opportunities building on the trusting caring and fun relationships that they have developed with our team. They are building on their confidence to try new things, to interact with their peers engaging and understanding that during their time with us their individual needs are being met. This all supports the foundations needed for them to make a positive contribution in the decision making, and positive behaviours needed in the rules of being together in our community.

Holiday Club

With thankyou to the KCC disabled commissioning service and the grant award from their short break Local Offer we are able to run our club provision

During the Summer, we did run our holiday club for 4 weeks over August., providing respite for the families of almost 90 children and young adults between the ages of 5-18.

Activities are hall based, we are able to utilise both floors of the hall, the sensory room and garden, with each day divided to have a planned activity in the afternoon for the children including visit to the swimming pool. We themed each week including very messy fun, and visits from tessellation dance proving to be a very memorable day for everyone.

We have a fantastic team, with many familiar faces from previous years supporting the staffing needed again, these included the e day-to-day management from our Junior club and Playschool managers, which provided the consistently knowledge and understanding of those entrusted to our care. They all worked so well together reflecting each day to ensure that the children's days were full of fun, activities, and social interactions, We were all supported by a large team of helpers, who provided the 1;1 care, many of whom were familiar with the children and the families from volunteering with us for our junior club or having worked in during the

previous summer. A huge thank you must go out to all for the commitment, time and hard work given to make our holiday club so successful. Sharing their knowledge of the children, the techniques and strategies needed to help keep them entertained happy and motivated, made the children feel safe and confident to explore all the opportunities and experiences we could provide for them.

Photographs taken throughout the summer show the huge smiles, reinforcing the fun they had, and the relationships formed.

This Ethos continues to be embedded in our Junior and Youth clubs throughout the year, for which Maidstone Mencap continues to be immensely proud.

We are able to run our club provisions from the major financial support from the short break grants applied for from KCC Disabled Commissioning Service, which support us to be able to offer much reduced fees for the 1;1 care and support provided, for this we say another thank you, as it goes a long way in sustaining the variety and quality of experiences we provided.

Another thank you must go Peggy Heron and the William Brake foundation for their huge donation which contributes significantly to the activities and resources we are able to provide for our Clubs.

Liane

BUILDING REPORT

Maidstone Mencap AGM Building Report for works 2023

Works carried out during 2023

Cess pit emptied January £228

Stonework front of building/kitchen walls cleaned and minor works carried out further works needed and will be quoted next year cost this year £7985.00

Water heater lady's toilet taken out and connected to heater in men's £590.00

Volunteer crew came and painted yellow lines onto steps, restrained shingles and tidied garden

Flooring laid in main hall £6552.00

Staircase decorated by Painter Mike £690.00

Hall and entrance painted by volunteers approx. £100

Health and safety risk assessment carried out and points raised to upgrade emergency lighting and fire doors £120

Planned work for 2024

Plans for 2024 are for points from Fire Risk Assessment to be completed, Upgrade fire doors in stages, 5 year electrical wiring check needed, Upgrade emergency lighting. Renew fire marshal training.

Stonework front/kitchen walls maintenance to continue.

Old boiler to be removed from outside cupboard.

Flooring throughout rest of building to get updated

Big Garden project whole garden overhaul to make fully accessible to all

Continue decorating throughout building

MONTHLY DRAW

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|------|-----------|----|--------------------|
| 2023 | January | 32 | Mrs H Thorndycraft |
| 2023 | February | 68 | Mike Craske |
| 2023 | March | 79 | Mr Edward Raikes |
| 2023 | April | 61 | Mr J Makuch |
| 2023 | May | 2 | Mrs L Jiles |
| 2023 | June | 99 | Derek White |
| 2023 | July | 13 | Mrs Carolyn Cox |
| 2023 | August | 5 | Norris Tynan |
| 2023 | September | 30 | Wendy West |
| 2023 | October | 22 | Mrs Barbara Day |
| 2023 | November | 73 | Mrs Ann West |
| 2023 | December | 69 | Mrs LM Jones |